

## ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

The invention provides caspase-9-related peptides and polypeptides capable of binding to an Inhibitor of Apoptosis Protein (IAP), as well as caspase-9 mutant that fail to undergo normal processing and fail to bind to an IAP. Nucleic acid molecules, including expression vectors, encoding such peptides and polypeptides are also provided. Such peptides and polypeptides, are useful for inducing apoptosis and identifying inhibitors and enhancer of apoptosis.

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